

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated May 18, 2005, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 13 and 14 are withdrawn in this application, and claims 11 and 12 were previously canceled. Claims 1-10, 13 and 14 remain pending in this application.

Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's Admitted Related Art (ARA) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,339,464 B1 to Anderson et al. (hereinafter "Anderson") and further in view of United States Patent 5,493,430 to Lu et al. (hereinafter "Lu"). Claims 7-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ARA in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,589,734 to Needham et al. (hereinafter "Needham") and further in view of Anderson and Lu.

The rejection of claims 1-10 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Claims 1-6 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims recites a combination of elements including, for example, "a liquid crystal layer for receiving the circularly polarized light and varying the phase of the circularly polarized light depending on the presence of an applied electric field." Claims 7-10 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims recites a combination of elements including, for example, "a liquid crystal layer interposed between the first and the second substrates, the liquid crystal layer having a first switching mode in which a phase of light is changed while passing through it, and a second switching mode in which the phase of light is not changed while passing through it." None of the cited references including the ARA, Anderson, Lu, and Needham, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention.

In the Office Action, the Examiner claims that the liquid crystal layer 16 of the ARA receives "the circularly polarized light and varying the phase of the circularly polarized light depending on the presence of an applied electric field." This is actually not the case. As can be seen in Figures 2 and 3 of the present application, the liquid crystal 16 of the ARA actually converts circularly polarized light into linearly polarized light. In the present invention, the liquid crystal layer changes the phase or direction of rotation of the circularly polarized light.

Therefore, the ARA is different from the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-10 are allowable over the cited references.

Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. *A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.*

Respectfully submitted,

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